

# TALON

NEW GAZETTE

AVILA UNIVERSITY  
VOLUME XV  
ISSUE 5

**'Dead Man' Comes Alive...p.7**

**Avila to get Slogan...p.4**

**Plus:**

**Who is Avila?  
Profiles...p.16**



# THIS ISSUE

Of the Talon focuses not only on the current production of Avila's theatre performance, Dead Man Walking, but it also focuses on some of the familiar faces on campus. Getting to know students and teachers on a small campus like Avila doesn't seem hard, but there are many faculty and students on campus with different backgrounds who have a story to tell.

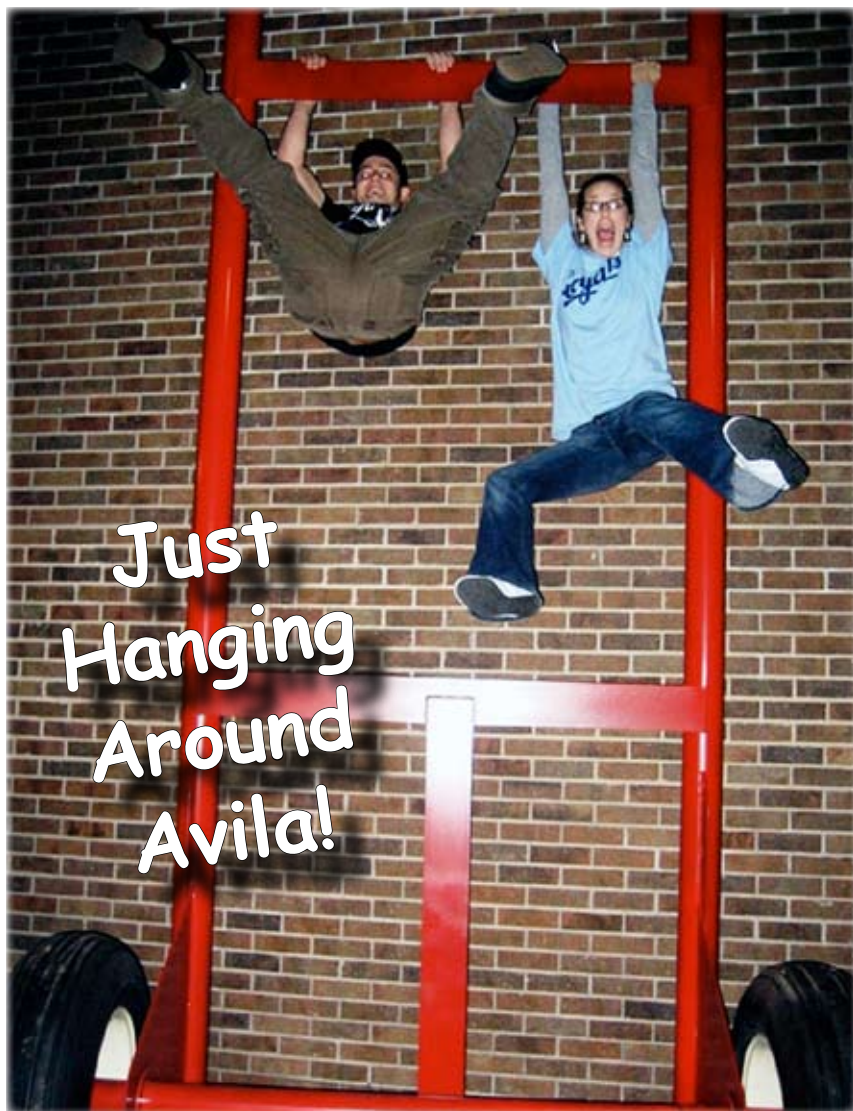
March is also women's history month. Highlighting the important contributions women have made to our rich history is extremely important, but sometimes looking locally at what women have contributed can be enriching as well. Avila's campus is full of amazing women. Dr. Schirmer, a history professor, is great example of this. If you don't know Dr. Schirmer I

invite you to talk to her and get to know her. Her enthusiasm in the class room is an inspiration to all.

I am also using the space of "In This Issue" for selfish reason this issue. I would like to thank my teammates for an amazing year. For the seniors

who have been here for four years with me thank you for being like family and making it bearable to come to practice. Y'all have made my years at Avila the greatest years of my life. I love you.

I would also like to thank my coach. My first three years at Avila were a great challenge to me. This year you have made basketball fun again and you have restored integrity to the basketball program. Thanks for choosing Avila and thanks for giving myself and my teammates a chance to be great. We couldn't have asked for a better coach.



Jon & Allison take a break from their studies to 'hang out.'

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Photo courtesy of Avila's Goppert Theatre

# TALON

## NEWS MAGAZINE

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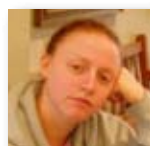
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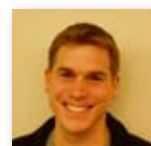
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The Talon News Magazine encourages letters to the editor. These may be submitted electronically or in writing and should include the writer's name, address, and telephone numbers for verification purposes. Letters can be mailed to the TALON News Magazine Editor, Avila University, 11901 Wornall Road, Kansas City, MO. 64145. The Talon reserves the right to edit letters for reasons of space, clarity, or inappropriate language. Copies of the Talon News Network Operational Guidelines may be requested by writing to the above referenced address.



### February Corrections

By Dani Asher

In the Feature of the February Issue, the length of time Coach McNally has been at Avila was referenced. He is going into his second season overseeing both the men's and women's teams.

Brandon Boles was incorrectly identified in the insert of the February Issue.

In the "Affirmative Action" piece in the February issue, Josh Loden was also incorrectly identified.

Dani Asher was the staff writer who contributed both the "Shades of Grey" and "Glitter Girls," in the February Issue.



## Mock Trial Team Delivers Promise

The Avila Mock Trial team traveled to participate in the Lower Midwest Regional hosted by Columbia College and held at the University of Missouri on February 23 and 24. The Avila team consisted of Stacy Franklin, Freddy Puckett, Josh Loden, Tom Wolf, Emilie Brumit, and Ben Kopp. Chamene Woods was unable to compete at the Regional but has been an integral part of the team. The Mock Trial Director, Andrea H. Olitsky, Esq. accompanied the team.

The competition was intensive. Unfortunately, Avila did not receive a bid to advance to the national competitions. However, we did receive the prestigious

award of "All Region Best Witness" which was presented to Brumit. She received one of the 10 awards given to the 132 students participating. Stacy Franklin was edged out at the final counting for the award of "All Region Best Attorney", coming in at 11th place.

Avila competed against twenty-one teams for a spot at nationals. This weekend completed all competitions from across the United States and assigned school teams who qualified to go onto the Silver National Competitions to be held at St. Paul, Minnesota and Waukegan, Illinois, to be held in mid-March. The Gold National Championship, held in St. Petersburg, Florida, takes place in mid-April.

Avila did not compete last year in the Mock Trial Competition. This was a new team, a new coach and a rebuilding year. Most of the team has never participated in Mock Trial at Avila or in high school. For a new team they started off well. Olitsky is very proud of the team and they are looking forward to next year.

The team also traveled to Washburn University as well as UMKC to participate in Invitational Competitions to prepare for the Regional event.

Mock Trial is a national intercollegiate activity that promotes critical thinking, cooperative problem solving, public speaking and mutual trust among team members, while affording students the opportunity to actively participate in



the trial process. Students assume the roles of both attorneys and witnesses for a hypothetical case and engage in trial activity and litigation. The student teams present the case in front of judges in competitions against teams from colleges and universities around the Midwest, as well as the entire nation.

Mock Trial is not just for those students thinking

about attending law school. The oral communication and logical reasoning skills that are honed in mock trial will benefit all students, regardless of their intended vocation. Mock Trial is a year long course. The case materials change each year alternating between a criminal case and a civil action therefore, students are encouraged to reenroll each academic year.

## "Study Buddy" Threatens Health

By Monica Lang

Adderall:  
Commonly prescribed for ADD

What is this miracle drug of which America's youth is so fond? That's right. It is a miracle drug, Adderall. Otherwise known as speed, Adderall is a stimulant drug which runs through one's central nervous system in order to help Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder. It is used to help individuals cope with focusing and short-term attention span. Drugs like Adderall are being used illegally by 20 percent of college students nationwide according to a

study published in The Johns Hopkins Newsletter in November 2002.

Students treat their bodies like they can do virtually anything. They binge drink, abuse drugs, smoke packs of cigarettes a day, and pull all nighters. Students can party 4 or 5 days during the week, pop in an Adderall the next day and be fine. Some take it just to stay awake, others take it to concentrate for long periods of time, and some take it simply to lose weight.

Why would America's youth stoop so low as to abuse

a prescribed drug? It is true that Adderall is a stimulating drug, so it enhances the brain's ability to focus and concentrate, enabling a student to be more

"productive." It is this property of Adderall that makes it so addicting, yet so deceiving.

The cause for Adderall abuse is mostly for academic purposes. A student who is under a lot of growing pressure from responsibilities, will do almost anything to alleviate some of that pressure. In a way, this makes Adderall the alcohol of schoolwork; in that it avoids the real issue at hand, which is procrastination.

Something that students lack is the facts about abusing a controlled substance such as Adderall. Continuous users eventually build up a tolerance, and then need more of the drug. Adderall is highly addictive, and a student who is not actually prescribed to use this drug can suffer numerous side-effects. According to the WebMD Health website, students believe that the benefits of using the drug outweigh the potential body damage or withdrawal he or she may experience later. The warning label on the drug clearly states that the misuse of the drug may result in heart and blood pressure problems.

As stated on the New York University website, Adderall is being taken as a "study aide" or a "study buddy," because its effects are similar to caffeine. In fact, Adderall is amphetamine,

a psycho stimulant, which puts it in the same family of drugs such as caffeine, cocaine, and meth.

Although abuse of Adderall is illegal, it is very hard to monitor because it is so easy to access. It is mostly up to students whether or not to abuse the pill. Prescribed drug abuse is a serious medical issue and still requires medical rehabilitation for recovery.

The demands of success can be overwhelming. As a result, every student may need a way to redirect or maintain his or her focus. This explains natural energy boosters which consist of exercising, sleeping well and eating right, according a health website. Instead of trying to obtain "super powers," students should see the natural powers in their own bodies and act on those.

For the first time in its ninety-year history Avila will embrace a motto. The Talon overheard President Slipitza discussing several different ideas for a motto with Sister Olive Louise Dallavis.

Now don't get too excited, they have only just begun to develop ideas for a motto. There is plenty of collaboration and analysis to be done before a decision is reached. Also, there is no deadline for the project so it's anybody's guess as to when a final decision will be revealed.

Dr. Slepitza kindly showed

The Talon four promising ideas for a motto they have come up with already and so far it looks promising.

Not so much because those

ideas are great but because

the candidates will be subject to intense scrutiny on many levels.

Slepitza explained that any motto-to-be for Avila will be put before many test audiences and committees to ensure that

the chosen word or phrase

succinctly transmits Avila's mission and serves as an overarching banner for the entire school. "Our motto must distinguish Avila from

other universities," he said.

In short, the goal is to come up with something that anyone involved with Avila can identify with it; sports teams, clubs, groups, employees, students, prospective students, and even parents and alumni.

The fact is most universities have a slogan or motto, which unifies the school and also helps recruit staff and students. If it is short, exciting, and memorable it will stick in people's minds, immediately reminding

logo on their website.

Give it time. Done right, a motto, slogan, tag line, whatever you want to call it, could really help Avila University stand out among its peers. That becomes really important when someone is thinking about where to attend school or is trying to figure out for whom to write a grant check.

Any suggestions or inquiries should be made to the Office of the President or Avila's Marketing Department

By Chris Williamson

them of Avila when they think about it.

For example, Xavier University's slogan, "The Power of X...Power for the Future," appears quite larger than the school name and

## Avila University... ...[Insert Slogan Here]

## Book Prices Cause Rage Blackouts

(Student Commentary By Emily Hoskins)

Some say you can never put a price on a good education. But oh how poor college wallets are emptying by the semester, due to the outrageous textbook prices.

Some may argue that they shell out enough dough to attend this University that they shouldn't have to be scrounging up even more to purchase over-priced textbooks. They might be valuable tools of learning, but they are costing way too much. Especially books like the "On Course" textbook required for First Year Seminar, that was a real winner. I bet freshmen kept it by their bedside table and read it every night before they went to bed thinking, 'This book will guide me

to a better life and a great future.' But as for those 'real' textbooks, the ones that will actually help us with our future, those prices

are not so forgiving. As one gets further into their major, most will find the

are not so forgiving. As one gets further into their major, most will find the

fee for a semester's worth of books to be close to five hundred dollars. It will not be mentioned how many Chipotle burritos can be

purchased with that amount of money. Professors may not realize it, but sometimes they are discouraging students from learning and progressing because they refused to pay for a high priced book. Many students' experiences show that the professor usually orders the paperback because it is cheaper, but what's the difference when it is still priced over one hundred dollars?

Professors do have most of the control when it comes to choosing a book for the course.

Professor Linda Strelluf has a simple method of choosing a textbook. First, she looks to see if it is a quality book that is capable of teaching the class what is needed to be taught, and then she

looks at the price. Being the considerate Professor she is, Strelluf sometimes uses handouts instead of textbooks because

sometimes it is actually more effective and cost efficient. As for Avila's bookstore, the facts are quite clear. They get the books in, mark the price up twenty five percent,

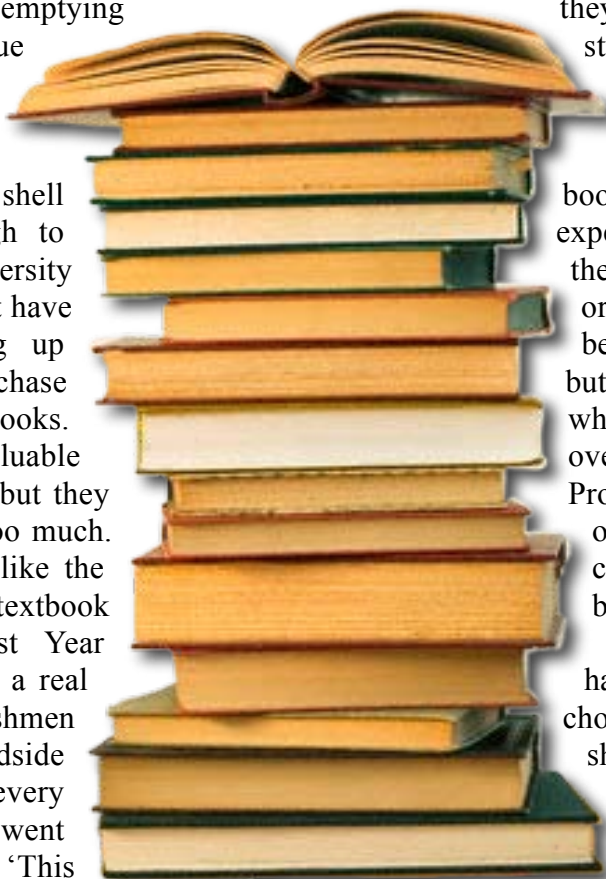
**"...[students] shouldn't be scrounging up even more to purchase over-priced textbooks."**

but really only receive ten percent profit because of the shipping charges.

A bookstore employee, John Toranto, made it very clear that being such a small school, "We don't get all the discounts that the bigger universities get." It's like buying in bulk because in the long run, it's cheaper. He also mentioned that the last two weeks of the semester the bookstore will buy your book for half price, unless the book is not needed the next semester. Just face it, the prices of the

books on campus are here to stay, but that doesn't mean it's the end of the line. A good recommendation is that first year students talk to the upperclassmen for help on finding the same books for a price that won't empty your bank account. One of the best websites to visit for textbook searching is bigwords.com. This particular site views a lot of other sites within

itself; some examples are half.com and amazon.com. Bigwords.com will find the cheapest available version of your book within seconds. Don't be surprised when you end up saving hundreds of dollars on books. Now sometimes it happens that a book might take a while to arrive, but it is still just waiting compared to spending. So use the technology that our society has so kindly laid in front of us and save precious money that could be used on oh so many better things.





# Event Calendar

What's Goin' On?  
Just Do It!

## Mondays

Wellness Day 4/16

## Tuesdays

Easter Egg Hunt/Coloring-6:30pm(CM) 4/3  
Softball-3pm/5pm 4/10  
Bowling-7pm  
Community Night Cook-Out-6:30pm(CM) 4/17  
Softball @ Fulton 4/24  
COP Meeting-4pm

## Wednesdays

Administrative Professionals Day 4/25

## Thursdays

Baseball-1pm/3pm 4/5  
Softball-2pm/4pm  
Transfer Visit Day 4/12  
Karaoke Night-7pm (GAP)  
Picnic & Carnival-11:30am 4/19  
Magician Nate Staniforth-7pm (GAP)  
Gypsy Production-8pm 4/26

## Fridays

Baseball-1pm/3pm 4/13  
Avila Field Day 4/20  
Softball-Tourney 4/27  
Picnic & Mini Golf 11:30am  
Gypsy Production-8pm

## Saturdays

4/7 Baseball @ BC  
Softball @ Canton  
4/14 Baseball-MANU  
Softball-12 pm/2pm  
Volleyball/Open Gym-2pm  
4/21 Baseball-1 pm/3pm  
New Student registration  
4/28 Baseball-1pm/3pm  
Softball-Tourney  
Leadership Ceremony-3pm  
Honors Banquet-5pm

## Sundays

4/1 Softball @ Baldwin City  
Mass (Palm Sunday)-11am  
4/15 Mass-11am  
Softball-1pm/3pm  
4/22 Mass-11am  
Baseball @ Baker  
Free Royals Tickets  
4/29 Mass-11am  
Baseball @ Graceland  
Gypsy Production-2pm

# Avila News

## Avila Professor's Work Selected for National Collection

Prof. Marci Alyward was honored with the purchase of one of her original works—"The Bottoms"—which was also featured recently in the KC Star. Bruce Hartman, Director of the new Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, purchased the piece from The Late Show, to be a part of the permanent collection.

The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art is funded by the Oppenheimer Foundation and is located at Johnson County Community College. The museum will open in about seven months. This is a very important collection of National contemporary artists and it is a very prestigious honor to have my work included. This is the first time my work has been purchased by a foundation for a museum collection.



Marci Alyward's painting of the West Bottoms in Kansas City, Missouri.

## Need a Good Kick?



If you've been on the sit, now's the time to get fit, at South Kansas City's leading fitness center. It's a kick at BENE-FIT Health & Fitness. Bring this ad and ask for the Avila Student FREE enrollment special for March.

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By Caitlin Stephenson

For the first time in “She Said, He Said” history Josh and I agree and even more surprising we agree for the same reasons. The death penalty is cruel and unusual punishment that does not deter crime. It is irrevocable and can be inflicted on the innocent. Furthermore, the death penalty is racist and classist. According to a 2003 Amnesty International report, blacks and whites were the victims of murder in almost equal numbers, yet 80 % of the people executed since 1977 were convicted of murders involving white victims causing one to conclude that a white life is more

She  
said...



DEATH PENALTY

valuable than a black life. The United States justice system has many flaws and is biased from the top down making it hard to justify implementing a system that takes a life. Those of the right color and economic background do not have the same chance of being executed as those who can buy their freedom. Like most aspects of the justice system the death penalty is not colorblind and does not promote justice.

By Josh Loden

While there are valid arguments on both sides of the death penalty question, for me it comes down to one question: which side promotes the greatest justice. While many naturally think that the pro-death penalty side offers the greatest justice, the river of blood actually flows in the opposite direction.



DEATH PENALTY

...he  
said

When we take the blindfold off our own diluted eyes we see the true American justice system and not a mythical, perfect system. Statistically, the American justice system is biased towards those of a certain color and towards those with money. If one is not of the right color and/or does not have money, that person is going to receive a sub-standard level of representation and thus an unfair sentencing. While I think that criminals should pay for their crimes, there are those that receive extremely harsh penalties in comparison to others simply because they do not have the right skin color and/or the right amount of money. Along with this, many people are now being found not-guilty because of new evidence after being in prison for twenty years.



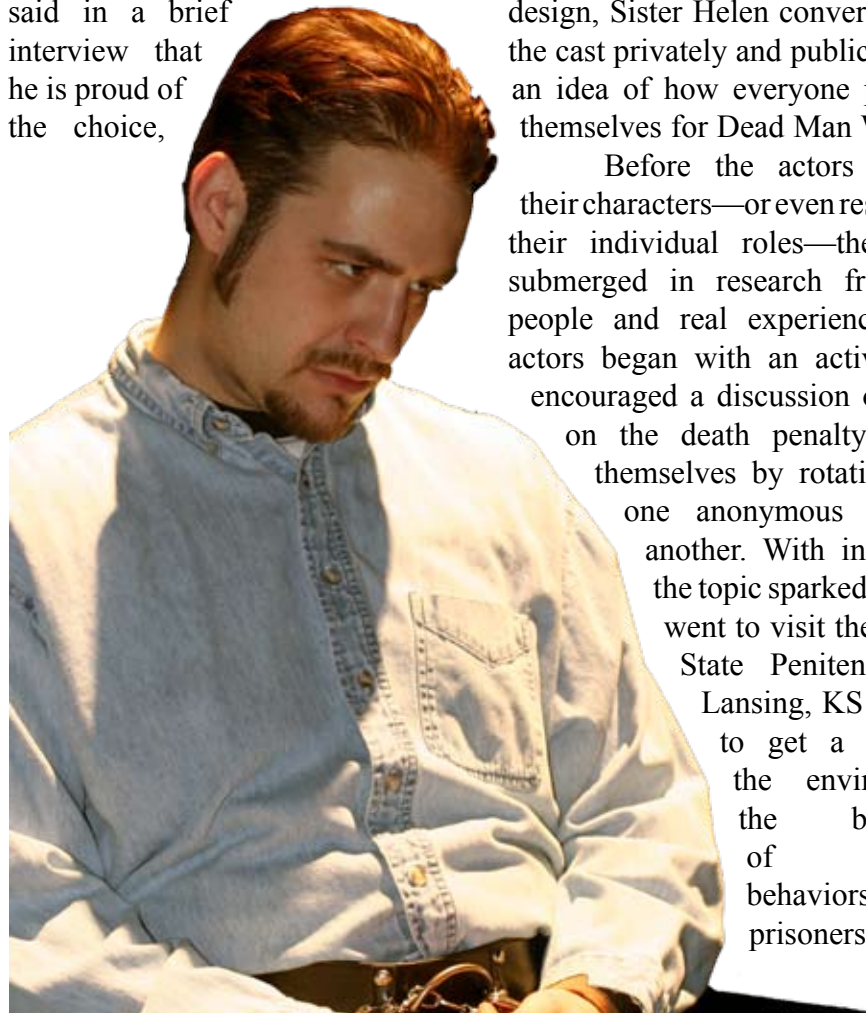
## 'Dead Man' Enlivens Debate over Death Penalty

**By  
Ben  
Kopp**

Strapped to the gurney with the needle in place and scenes from his murder flashing behind him, Matthew Poncelet died of lethal injection at the hands of the State of Louisiana. In the final weeks before this event, Poncelet found redemption via several visits with Sister Helen Prejean while everyone affected by his actions went on a journey that made them question the idea of taking a life for a life.

Based on a true story, *Dead Man Walking: The Play* is a nationwide theatre project that was created for the purpose of finding the best way to help people begin to discuss and learn about the death penalty. Wishing to help tell the story of Sister Helen, who is a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the Avila University Theatre has joined over a hundred colleges in performing this wondrous production, which was directed by Dr. Charlene Gould, Dean of the College of Humanities and Performing Arts.

Senior Peter Weber, who portrayed Matthew Poncelet, said in a brief interview that he is proud of the choice,



commitment toward the play, and the performance of everyone involved with *Dead Man Walking*. Avila's participation in the project shows dedication to the expression of ideas, and aids writer Tim Robbins in considering how Avila—along with the other colleges—accounted for the ambiguities of *Dead Man Walking*.

One aspect of consideration is the stage design. Sarah Van Horn, the scene designer, worked hard with the help of several production crewmembers to create a prison-like scaffold upstage of several platforms at different levels that form a broken stained-glass window. Combined with a background that changed in color via lighting throughout the production, the audience was drawn into the mood of each scene while being shown the breakaway from traditional viewpoints, which remained a prominent theme.

Upon seeing the design and its application to the play, Sister Helen discussed how delighted she was to see such a stage and asked to take several pictures of the design back to Tim Robbins for his deep consideration. After discussing her enjoyment of the design, Sister Helen conversed with the cast privately and publicly to get an idea of how everyone prepared themselves for *Dead Man Walking*.

Before the actors became their characters—or even researched their individual roles—they were submerged in research from real people and real experiences. The actors began with an activity that encouraged a discussion of views on the death penalty among themselves by rotating from one anonymous note to another. With interest in the topic sparked, the cast went to visit the Kansas State Penitentiary in Lansing, KS in order to get a feel for the environment, the behaviors of guards, behaviors of prisoners, and the

intermingling thereof. "It was pretty scary when the prisoners came out and walked right next to us," Alexa Washington, who portrayed a guard, commented. "I didn't really like that."

As the days progressed, several guest speakers came to speak with the actors. Dr. Carol Coburn came to discuss the religious aspects of the play, Angie Keck and Dr. Delaney Dean discussed the

**"I just couldn't think of someone actually dying like this."**

*-Josh Gleeson*

views of defense and prosecuting attorneys, Dr. Sherry Schirmer and Dr. Stephen Roberds provided information on the historical and political aspects of the issues in the production, and Michael Kruse shared his experiences that preceded and followed his sister's murder.

During and after the group research for *Dead Man Walking*, the actors went out to do individual research for their characters. As their research progressed and the actors became pulled into the production, *Dead Man Walking* had a number of impacts. "It made me question my own values from before the show," said Lucas Villanueva. He had portrayed Clyde Percy, the father of the murdered Hope Percy, along with the chair of the parole board and the lie detector operator.

Additionally, Lucas said that there are three books related to the play that everyone should read along with Sister Helen's original *Dead Man Walking* novel. These books are *Dead Family Walking* by D. D. de Vinci, *Victims of Dead Man Walking* by Michael L. Varnado and Daniel P. Smith, and *Forgiving the Dead Man Walking* by Debbie Morris. These novels allow the reader to see the events of *Dead Man Walking* from the views of a victim, a victim's family, and a detective who found the corpse of a victim from the original novel.

Xanda Pilley, who portrayed Sister Helen Prejean,

comments, "Before the show, I was against the death penalty, but I didn't know enough about it. I knew that doing this show would test me like none other before. However, after going through what Sister Helen actually went through, theatrically of course, I am now even more certain of my views and plan to do something about it."

Another view came from Josh Gleeson, who portrayed the murdered Walter Delacroix as well as a younger brother of his murderer. "It wasn't until I filmed the scene

where I was killed did I start to see," he commented. "I just couldn't think of someone actually dying like this. Because of participating in this show, I now truly feel why this is so important to people more than any speaker or film could do."

Chelsea Ballew was the next to comment on a similar experience. "Playing polar opposite roles, the mother of the condemned and the nurse who injects him, has only led me further to the point that there is no clear, concise answer about the death penalty."

The production did not simply touch the cast and the general audience. Props Master, Rachael Roth, had this to say. "Before coming into this show, I was against the death penalty. Now this show has cemented my beliefs that killing someone who kills is morally wrong."

While *Dead Man Walking* has strengthened some beliefs of individuals on both sides of the death penalty issue, the play has brought many more people to question their beliefs. Rather than forcing everyone to believe the same thing, this is the result that Sister Helen wants. Although she herself is against this form of punishment, Sister Helen wants people to talk about the death penalty and make informed decisions about it for themselves.



## Band to Watch: Carmine Red

By Banen Chaney

Hypnotic vocals and mesmerizing instrumentals can be expected while listening to the Independence-based band, Carmine Red. The band is comprised of four members; Dexter Williams—lead vocals, Chad Veach—guitar, Dustin Racen—bass, and Ryan Hill—drums.

“The listener should feel as if they were the very inspiration of the song,” Williams said. “They should expect to experience our music as if they were traveling inside of it.”

After playing two shows in February, the band has planned a very eventful spring and summer.

“In the next few months, we hope to finish the album and do lots and lots of touring,” Veach said. On March 20, the band anticipates playing a show at The Applehouse in St. Joseph.

The band’s album, Anniversary, has songs that appeal to numerous genres of music. The music can only

be described as being peaceful and chaotic at the same time. The songs are a breath of fresh air in comparison to today’s radio choices. The only obvious inspiration is the band’s own creativity.

Carmine Red has big dreams and the motivation to achieve them. “I want Carmine Red to see the world,” Williams said.

For more information on the band or to preview a few of their songs, visit [myspace.com/carminered](http://myspace.com/carminered).



Open your eyes and ears to Carmine Red.

## The Chinese New Year

By Wei-Chu Wang

Saturday, February 17 was the Chinese New Year. During this time, all of the Chinese people in the world were celebrating. In Taiwan, this was the time to visit families and friends. There were a lot of Chinese people in the United States who were also celebrating.

The greatest population of Chinese people living in the U.S. are in California. In Pasadena, the celebration started at 10 am. People saw a lot of floats with flowers on them. Later, many Asian groups such as Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan and Korea, gave a dance show. When they arrive at the destination park, people have many choices of traditional Asian food.

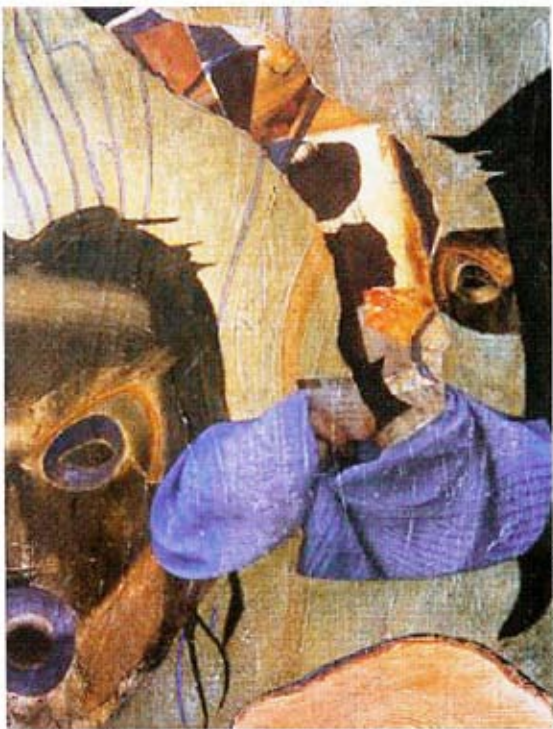
Also, the stores may sell many traditional Asian art works so people can buy whatever they like.

In Las Vegas, the celebration is different than in other cities. People go to Las Vegas to try their luck. So during the day of Chinese New Year, many Asian people come from outside the U.S. to fly to Las Vegas.

This year, the week of Chinese New Year was also during the NBA All-Star game. A lot of people went there to take part in the celebration or to watch the All-Star game. So in Vegas, that weekend was packed because they had a lot of visitors for a wonderful weekend.

In New York, there is a big firework show that starts at noon. People start waiting in the morning because they want to get a good view to watch the show. The stores got so much business since the morning. In China Town, it is full of people. For Chinese people it is the time to get families together, so they go to buy traditional food to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

No matter where the celebration is, people are all happy about this moment. Asian people started to come to U.S. since 1980 or earlier, so this is the time for them to celebrate their countries. Wherever they are, they will all keep this in mind and never forget.

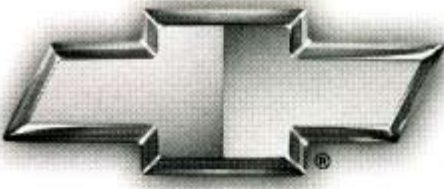





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MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup> – APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>

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# New members inducted into Beta Beta Beta

By Professor Steve Dagget

The Biology Department and Avila's chapter (Pi Iota) of Beta Beta Beta, the national biology honor society, sponsored its ninth annual induction ceremony on Wednesday, February 28, 2007. This event was special in that this year's ceremony had an alumni panel address those in attendance. The panel consisted of Annie Blackman (Class of 2004), Brett Nedich (Class of 2003), Dusty Werth (Class of 2006), and Rodney Wittenberg (Class of 1999).



New, regular members who were inducted were: Jayme Carter, Christine Davis, Teresa Diebal, Emily Fryer, Jennifer Jones, Caroline Kibe, Penny Leininger, Tiffany Swan, Sydney Thomas, Shawn Wadsworth, and Sean Wattenbarger. Regular members must major in biology or related field, take at least 3 biology courses, and maintain a 3.0 average or better in these courses. The ceremony was performed by Alex Muensch (Pi Iota chapter president and class of 2007), Kourtney Nigh (class of 2007), and Pam Taylor (class of 2009).

Anna Nicole Smith's life was filled with controversy and drama—why should her death be any different? The spectacle began when Smith married Texas oil tycoon, J. Howard Marshall II in 1994. At the time, she was 26 and he was 89. Many labeled Smith a mere gold digger, but surely it was true love. Marshall died the very next year, and since that point Smith had been involved in a court battle over her deceased husband's estate with Marshall's son.

estranged mother Virgie Arthur are all contenders in the race. Recently J. Howard Marshall II has been thrown in the mix as well, after it was claimed that Anna Nicole Smith froze his sperm and had herself inseminated. A hearing to determine guardianship will take place in the Bahamas.

Next, there was the custody battle over Smith's body as to where she would be buried. Stern requested she be buried next to her son in the Bahamas, while mother Virgie Arthur was adamant about

## Never-ending Drama

By Dani Asher

A few days after the birth of Smith's daughter Daniellyn Hope in September, Anna's son Daniel died in the Bahamas at the age of twenty from a lethal drug mixture. Daniel is currently buried there. Daniellyn's birth certificate stated Howard K. Stern was the father, but there are others who have become active in the fight for her guardianship.

Photographer Larry Birkhead, Zsa Zsa Gabor's husband Frederic Von Anhalt (who claims the two had a long-term affair), as well as

her being buried in her native Texas.

After a long and drawn out process, (while Smith's body was rapidly decomposing) a sobbing Judge Larry Seidlin appointed custody of Smith's body to her daughter's lawyer. The Judge did make it clear that he wanted Anna Nicole's body buried beside her son's in the Bahamas. As the general public, all we can do is wait and see what happens next in the soap opera of Anna Nicole Smith.

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## Women Athletes Help Community

By Banen Chaney



On Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, Avila's female athletes participated in a Girl Scout Sports Sampler day in Mabree field house. Soccer, volleyball, golf, basketball, cheerleading, and dance were all represented.

"During Girl Scout day we helped the girls learn three volleyball skills; passing, setting, and serving," volleyball player Ashlyn Sebby said. "We also taught them about teamwork and made sure they always gave

someone a high five."

The girl scouts participated in this event in order to receive their sports patch. They also received lots of experience in diverse fields.

"I think it helped the girls by getting them acquainted with different sports, not a lot of kids have the opportunity to try them all without severely damaging their parents' budgets," Sebby said.

The girl scouts got a chance to be open-minded about multiple activities.

"I think it gives them some exposure to things they might not experience otherwise. You can pick up a basketball and play in your driveway, but unless you are on a competitive mini-squad, they might not get to experience some of the things we taught them," cheerleader Bailey Kyle said.

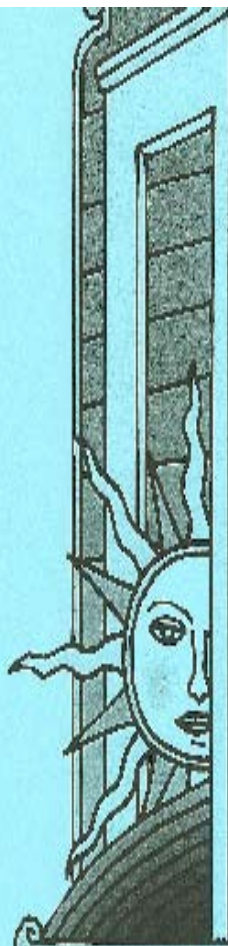
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### *Student Scholar Day!*

Undergraduate and Graduate students present papers or projects that represent outstanding scholarship in their major.

Monday, April 2, 2007

Whitfield Centre and the Library

All campus community members are invited to attend any or all of the Scholar Day presentations which will be in Whitfield in the morning and poster sessions in the Library starting at noon.

No word in the English language rhymes with  
month, orange, silver, or purple.



## Avila Basketball Recap



Focused on the game

The Avila University Women's Basketball team had a very successful year under first-year Head Coach Larry Williams. The girls posted an 18-12 regular season record and a 10-10 conference mark. This was good enough for a sixth place finish in the conference and a first round playoff game against Missouri Valley.

The team placed three players on the Honorable Mention list for all-conference selections. They were Senior forward Caitlin

Stephenson, Sophomore guard Sarah Parker, and Sophomore post Ashley Townsend.

The girls had eight seniors on their roster and will miss the leadership next year, but a solid nucleus of underclassmen return. Coach Williams will also return for his second season and with a solid first year under his belt, look for good things from the Women's Basketball program in 2007-08 and beyond.

**By John DeRoo**

The mens basketball team begun the season off on a rough start. The team went 1-9 in conference before showing a complete transformation. With ten games remaining in conference, the struggling Eagles fought back and picked up five wins to qualify for the conference tournament.

This would be the first time the men have qualified for the tournament in three years. Since 2004, the team has managed to increase their wins, but never quit made it to the tournament. Head coach, Anthony Hall, has high hopes for his young team. The team will only graduate two

Seniors, leaving Hall with a lot to work with.

"It's encouraging to see the guys believe in what we're trying to do," said Hall. "It's going to take a lot of work starting now in post-season."

The Eagles unfortunately lost in the first round of the tournament to Mid-America Nazarene and finished the season with an overall record of 13-18.

Troy Valencia, returning starter, said "Our expectations for next year are nothing less that a national championship."

**By Kayle Walker**



The spirit of teamwork

## Hardaway Comes Out: "I hate gay people..."

By Dani Asher

There has been more homophobic controversy lately, when former Miami Heat guard Tim Hardaway ran his mouth on a Miami Sports Radio Station about how he would not want a gay player on his team.

Hardaway went on to say, "You know, I hate gay people, so let it be known."

He said that he doesn't like gay people nor did he want to be around anybody that was gay. "It shouldn't be in the world or the United States."

This topic was brought up because former NBA center John Amaechi officially came out of the closet about a week before

the Hardaway interview. Amaechi was the first NBA player, former or current, to admit openly admit this. Hardaway said he would not want Amaechi on his team and that he would try to distance himself if the two had been teammates.

Amaechi reacted by saying that although

Hardaway's comments were among other things bigoted, at least they were honest.

Former coach Pat Riley said that type of attitude would not be tolerated with the organization and that he was sure Hardaway regretted his statement. That is exactly the case.

Hardaway's agent said that Tim regretted and apologized for the statements he had made. Hardaway said that he respected all people. NBA Commissioner David Stern proceeded to ban Hardaway from the All-Star weekend festivities.





By Dr. Amity Bryson

# Women's Studies Essay Award Winners

There are many facets to the Women's Studies Program at Avila University. First and foremost this is a multidisciplinary, academic program. Many faculty identify on campus within the area of Women's Studies; students may pursue a minor in Women's Studies. Through this curriculum

the Women's Studies minor aims to build an awareness of women's rich history and culture, an understanding of their contemporary status, and a consideration of their future possibilities. Women's Studies courses are more than simply courses about women. Rather, they exhibit a sensitivity to women and women's issues and contain within them a feminist theoretical framework around which course material is organized. Courses emphasize women's intellectual and creative

contributions and sensitize people to women's concerns.

They teach the significance of gender in our lives and an ability to interpret and study academic disciplines from a feminist perspective. Women's Studies courses are taught and taken by both sexes.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the minor and the interest of a cross section of individuals on campus there are two areas of leadership in Women's Studies. The Women's Studies Advisory Council includes all faculty

and staff who identify with Women's Studies on campus. This group includes approximately 45-50 individuals in a given year.

The Steering Committee is a group of five to seven individuals who serve the larger Advisory Council by maintaining the curriculum and planning programming, professional development, and service opportunities. The 2006-2007 members of the Steering Committee are: Dr. Carol Coburn, Sr. Marie Joan Harris, Jeremy Lillig, Dr. Tony

Michel, Kathleen Roy, Joe Snorgrass, and I act as director.

Each year in the fall all Women's Studies minors are eligible to submit an application and an essay. The Women's Studies Steering Committee selects the winner and awards a monetary gift of \$500-\$1000. This year the committee selected two \$500 winners, L. Whitney Beiler and Caitlin Stephenson, whose winning essays can be read below.

## Big Dreams

By Caitlin Stephenson

Growing up in my house was different then it was for many. I come from a big Irish family full of strong women who taught me to be assertive. Both my mom and my step-mom are very strong women who have shown me that being a woman means being anything other than meek. This combined with my dad who told me every day that I could be anything I wanted as long as I worked hard led me to big dreams.

As a little girl growing up my first dream was to be the first woman to play in the NFL. When I got older and didn't weigh 200 pounds I realized that this wasn't going to be possible. However, I did continue to play sports whenever I could. On the playground with the other kids is where I first realized that I wasn't like the other girls. The other kids always called me a tomboy because I would rather play sports than house. I thought I was doing what I loved. When I would go home my parents would encourage and congratulate me on my athletic achievements, but I couldn't help but feel different.

The fact is I am different. Not because I play sports but because I never saw women as fitting into a mold separate from men. When people tell me I can't do something it drives me to try harder to achieve the impossible. When I

learn about other women who have been held back, picked on, and discriminated against I will always want to fight to right those injustices.

I will never be timid or shy because I wasn't raised that way. I have watched both of my moms stand strong and I have been encouraged by my dad to be like them.



For me, women's studies is a way to be like my moms. It's a chance for me to learn from other strong women and to learn what injustices are still out there.

But most of all women's studies gives me a chance to feel normal.

Learning about women who have been discriminated against shows me that it is worth fighting for equality. Other women's stories also give me a reason to fight and be passionate about being a feminist. Through women's studies my dreams have grown even bigger.

After realizing I couldn't be in the NFL my dream changed to be a lawyer. Today, I still want to be a lawyer, but the reasons have changed. I want to fight for those who can't fight for themselves and I want to conquer what has traditionally been seen as a man's world. Learning about women has only made my passion grow and helped me realize my true ambitions. I guess you could say women's studies are me. It is my moms, and it is every woman who is sick of feeling different.

## What Blue Valley Didn't Teach Me

By L. Whitney Beiler

I do not think I had ever heard the words put together until I came to Avila. Women's Studies. . . studying women? Public school taught me about equal rights, equal respect, but I had never really understood the need for it. I was somewhat naïve. I did not think getting called girly and playing with Barbie was sexist, just common place. I had never really caught on to all the preconceived ideas for women and all the disadvantages the women before me had dissolved. I

just chalked most of the housewife stereotypes up to, "oh, that was the time" as if that is an excuse.

I know I had been programmed with that "ugly feminist" stereotype we read about in Images and Realities, because when I first heard about women's studies it was brushed off, as if it was a "radical" course. Now I can honestly say I have yet to meet an ugly feminist and that even if I had their physical appearance has nothing to do with whether their theories have merit.

But I was interested in law, so my sophomore year my advisor, Dr. Bryson, recommended Legal Rights of Women and all of a sudden it was real. These real cases made me aware of all the hardships women went through. Time was no longer an excuse for sexual harassment and personal prejudices.

I think it must be Avila's deep history with the Sisters of St.

Joseph and the enthusiastic, open minded faculty that made women's studies stand out to me. I got pulled toward it and then began being educated and now interested. How could I not be interested by all the developments women have made? If it were not for them I would still be



expected to perfect piano and polishing. Neither of which I have any aptitude for. It is too bad these words were not put together earlier in my life. Why are there not women's studies units in 5th grade classes?

Women's Studies means that we are analyzing half of our world's population. We are taking a look at the disservice society used to pay them and learning how to change the world. By learning from your mistakes you can not only grow as a person, but contribute more value to your community.

They say knowledge is power and as a woman learning about women's studies, how can knowledge not be power? Maybe my education is not going to empower me to lift a bus up in the air using only my brute strength, but it has empowered my individualism. I am who I am, not that I have ever doubted that, but I am more secure in it now. I find myself not listening to other people's beliefs of how I should dress or act, especially when their criticism is followed by "that is not lady-like."



# March is Women's History Month

Test your knowledge of women's history and WIN!

1. For two years she constructed a radio telescovery of the first four pulsars. She is:  
Elizabeth Blackwell  
Margaret Mead  
Susan Bell Burnell
2. This trial first introduced the principle of "the best interest of the child."  
Pennsylvania v. Addicks  
Roe v. Wade  
Ireland v. Smith
3. She helped bring provisions to soldiers on the front lines and set up the Bureau of Records. She is:  
Clara Barton  
Florence Nightingale  
Jane Addams
4. Best known for her series of well-loved children's books, this writer published her first book at the age of 65. Her books, still popular today, are autobiographical tales of her own childhood as a pioneer girl.  
Jane Austen  
Laura Ingalls Wilder  
J. K. Rowling
5. Not only was she the first women to swim across the English Channel, she did it in record breaking time--beating the fastest man's record by 1 hour and 49 minutes. She is:  
Babe Didrikson Zaharias  
Rosemary Casals  
Gertrude Ederle
6. Lucy Walker, an English mountaineer, is the first woman to successfully climb the Matterhorn in Switzerland in the year:  
1871  
1875  
1921
7. This cosmonaut was the first woman in space, orbiting the earth 48 times in the Vostok VI in 1963:  
Carley Fiorina  
Urvashi Vaid  
Valentina Tereshkova
8. This actress has had her career Speed to new heights while Wrestling Ernest Hemingway and using a little more than just Practical Magic to steal fans' and critics' hearts alike. She is:  
Nicole Kidman  
Meg Ryan  
Sandra Bullock
9. This choreographer is to modern dance what Pablo Picasso was to modern art: the single greatest innovator of this century. Her name has become synonymous with modern dance in America. Her career spanned four decades and earned her the Medal of Freedom and the French Legion of Honor. This dancer is none other than:  
Dorothy Dandridge  
Martha Graham  
Ginger Rogers
10. A self-proclaimed "published author earning substantial royalties" at an early age provided all the motivation necessary to become a respected, lauded author in her "later" years with works such as Jacklight and Love Medicine. This scribe is:  
Jackie Collins  
Rosemary Casals  
Louise Erdrich

***First one to  
submit the correct  
answers wins a  
1GB JUMP DRIVE!***

***Please submit  
your answers to:***

[stephenson1775@avila.edu](mailto:stephenson1775@avila.edu)

***Congratulations  
to February's  
Winner!***



***Janell Burton***

## February's Answers

1. Jesse Owens
2. Harriet Beecher Stowe
3. Joe Louis
4. Hiram Revels
5. Abraham Lincoln
6. Marcus Garvey
7. John Brown
8. Harriet Tubman
9. Booker T. Washington
10. Duke Ellington
11. Granville T. Woods
12. Henry Highland Garnet
13. Frederick Douglas
14. Martin Luther King
15. Thurgood Marshall
16. Sojourner Truth
17. Elijah McCoy
18. Rosa Parks
19. Marian Anderson
20. Barbara Jordan



## New Parking Lot to Arrive at Avila University

By: Megan Carnes

Avila's parking is once again in the spotlight, but this time under new light and bringing new hope. Students and faculty have been complaining about the lack of parking for years, and now it seems like someone listened, but how much frustration will 100 spaces alleviate?

Bob Creech, public safety director explained that there are approximately 750 current spaces on campus, but 40 of them have been taken away with the current construction behind Dallavis, leaving just over 700 spaces for close to 2,000 students. The new parking lot will add 100 new spaces, said to be completed by the return of spring break but still, around 800 spaces for almost 2,000 students?

"I like the progress made in putting in the new spaces but it is still not enough for the all students and faulty on campus. I think cars will still be pouring onto side streets and parking illegally when the lot is completed," Wes Backes, senior.

This starts a brand new argument about the illegal parking and the frustration with the tickets students are receiving. It is fair to say public safety has turned soft in all fairness to students.

Creech, explained that he understands that with the construction some students and faculty have no other choice to park illegally and that he has chosen to not give tickets.

It isn't something he likes to do but has to in order to try to help students' comply with the rules. Creech said, while this construction is being completed, his focuses are on the cars parking in handicap spots and the Montessori school drop off

spots. There are only ten handicap spots and many have had to walk from the other side of campus, because of students who have no consideration for those who truly need the spots.

"I had a serous knee injury last fall and was in a brace and crutches. I had a handicapped sign but there were always cars with no signs parked in front of Whitfield, so I had to park down across the street in a neighborhood and walk that whole way in a brace on crutches.

it would be smart to make designated spots, which would cut out some confusion and frustration, but the question is, who would park where?

"I feel the dorm residents should park in the new lot further away since they don't leave as frequently. I am constantly going back and forth from school. And when I see the same car in the same spot day after day I do get really irritated," says Sarah Sinovic

Others disagree; Tim Bosler

that is why they are here in the first place."

No matter the argument it is clear to see that Avila is doing its best to accommodate to the frustrations shown over recent years but when comparing Avila to other schools, large and small, the students here are lucky and many agree.

"I transferred from Northwest and parking here is nothing compared to here. Sure, I get irritated when I have to walk a long way in cold weather or when

I am running late but at Northwest you had to prepare yourself for situations like that," said Senior Erin Stewart

When looking at just Avila's campus it is clear to see that parking will always be an issue because of location and the land available. Creech explained that there is more to building a new parking lot then just deciding we need one and breaking ground. Surrounding neighbors have to give permission, zoning permits take months to get, drainage has to be put in and time has to permit.

Whatever the opinion might be it is clear to see when digging deeper into the issue of campus parking, the issue is not being ignored. Many faculty and staff are on the students' side and are hoping for more developments in the future. There will always be full lots and spaces taken by those who like to bend the rules, but it is everyone at Avila who has to deal with the same thing and everyone is getting frustrated.



As the lot is prepped for pavement, questions arise.

Not fun!"

Creech said all he wants is for students to have common sense and if they come in and talk to him he is willing to listen. He wants them to know they made the wrong decisions and will not do it again, if that is established then he is willing to try and help out the students.

But the illegal parking isn't the only issue or opinions heard all over campus, many thought

feels that isn't fair to have the dorm residents park in the new lot, forcing them to carry laundry, grocery and other items they need that far, which to many make sense,

"I agree that it is just as much as a hassle for residents to park far away because we do leave more than people think, I don't like staying on campus all day. Faculty should park there because I think students come first and



# Avila Profiles

## Jon Osgood Seeks the Best From All

By Jonathan Green

Many people do not know what they want to do with their lives. Many people go to college not knowing what they want to study. It is a tough decision for a lot of people, and that is why Jon Osgood, though most call him Jon, does what he does. Jon is a counseling intern at Avila University.

In counseling Jon helps people with a wide range of issues, from social problems, personal issues, and also helping people decide what college studies might fit their personality type, or what degrees might fit their interest.

Jon helps people who struggle with knowing what to do with their lives because he was the same way in college.

Jon attended Rockhurst University where he originally started off as an English major. He then changed his major to Philosophy and Political Science.

"I enjoy arguing with people, it's fun," was Jon's response to why he chose that degree. After graduating college with a Bachelor's degree, he knew he didn't want to make a career out of it. Jon's childhood came



back to him as he recalled what he really wanted to do with his life.

While growing up Jon's Mom was a therapist at a local school. "When she came home from work everyday she was happy because she got to help other people." It was

that satisfaction that Jon saw in his Mother that caused him to want to do the same thing, and see the same satisfaction in his own life.

Jon had just recently moved from Ohio to the Kansas City area, when he met a professor who taught at Johnson County Community College. He suggested that Jon try out some Psychology courses at Avila.

Although Avila was not his first choice, he decided to give it a try. He took a few classes and then enrolled in Avila's Psychology program. Jon has been at Avila for the past few years acquiring his Master's degree.

Now he is now doing something that makes him happy. He is helping other people, and is following in his Mother's footsteps. Nothing could

make Jon happier than coming home every day knowing that he was able to help someone else in his counseling sessions.

Apart from his work at Avila, Jon lives a fairly normal life. He works a part-time job outside of Avila, and enjoys reading. He reads different types of scientific books as well as books about medicine.

"I like self education books, I like to discover and learn new things for myself." Jon also loves to spend time with his family and friends as much as possible.

He enjoys hanging out, having fun with other people, and playing the drums in a local rock band. Doing what Jon does everyday would not be easy for some people... working a 75 hour week, and still finding time to fit in everything else.

Although Jon's life would not be easy for most people, he enjoys the challenge and is happy to do what he does everyday.

## Who is Avila? YOU!

Student Commentary  
by Chris Williamson

If you were to ask what Avila is, you might get a response such as, "It is a university, a place of higher learning, a school." But what are those things without people? An institution without people has no purpose, no reason for being.

This section of the Talon is dedicated to Avila's purpose: people. And these are just a few of the people that make Avila what it is. Avila is a learning community made up of educators, students, and support personnel, all working together to achieve individual goals.

The individuals don't exist for the institution, the institution exists to serve the interests of the individuals. And it does. The people profiled in these pages are it. They're doing it! Following their passions, working hard, and accomplishing their goals.

I have actually known folks who see a Harmony Month-type celebration as some sort of political agenda at work. However, if you look at it from the individual level, it is clear that we are simply many different people who have to live and work together in harmony to accomplish our goals.

We rely on others for everything from preparing our food, to assembling the computer that I am typing this on, to the workers that printed this newspaper.

Think of all the contact we have with each other. It's essential that we take a moment during Harmony Month and truly comprehend the vast contributions others have made to our lives, even without us knowing it.

And that brings us back to Avila, and to you, me, and those profiled on these pages. All of our contributions put together create what Avila is. Working in harmony isn't some arbitrary mantra, it's fundamental, and at the core of our lives here. We at the Talon hope you enjoy learning about people you might not have learned of otherwise.

www.thetalon-online.com 15

## Kramer Crams Knowledge

By Seneca Booth

Do you ever need help with a class assignment? Or help finding a particular textbook? Well Larry Kramer is the man to see for these questions and more. Many Avila students don't know that former Emporia football star and Kansas resident, is Avila's very own Access Service Manager, located in the library on campus. Mr. Kramer has accomplished many things in his life, such as a Master's degree in Library Science and Information Management. Because of this, Larry has had many different job offers

in the education field; everything from teaching sixth grade English to serving as Head Football Coach of a local high school.

He goes on to add "This job is a perfect fit for my skill; I like to help people with real life situations. A librarian is like a good waiter or waitress. If you are hungry, the waiter is not just going to offer you something to eat, but they will also offer you something to drink and desert. That is how I approach my job."

He also adds that "Life is one big information



problem and I enjoy helping people find the answer to their problems."

In addition, one of Larry's biggest interests is sports,

and particularly football. He has served as a Head high school football Coach for many years. As he pulls out a number of books that are scattered around his office, he shows me everything from Bobby Knight to "How to Win the Super Bowl" by Bill Walsh.

He adds "That is was one of the biggest challenges in my life, to be able to take a group of young men and explain the information to them all so everyone will be on the same page."



# Avila Profiles

## Iliff's Passion is Uplifting

**By Brooke McNally**

Steve Iliff, Ph.D. is Dean of Avila University's School of Professional Studies (more commonly referred to as Avila Advantage). Iliff joined the Avila staff in 1995 as a professor in the School of Visual and Communication Arts. He is now in his third year as Dean of the School of Professional Studies.

As a professor in the School of Visual and Communication Arts, Iliff was passionate about teaching classes such as Team Leadership and Conflict Resolution. When asked about his decision to go from professor to Dean, he said, "I hesitated greatly because I loved the communication program and what I was doing. I loved the people I was working with. There was a great dynamic between the faculty and the students. So yes, I hesitated, but this was such a tremendous opportunity, I had to take it. I am thoroughly enjoying it." Before becoming a professor, he managed non-profit organizations. Over the years, he has been hired as a consultant providing workshops and training in the areas of conflict resolution to companies such as St. Paul's School of Theology, AT&T, and Farmland Industries. He has also been a speaker at the Greater Kansas City Association for the Education of Young Children.

Prior to his career at

Avila, Iliff directed the Peace Studies program at Park University while he was working on his doctorate at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Iliff's bachelor's degree is in Public Administration from Upper Iowa University in Fayette, IA. He received his bachelor's through distance learning, when the concept was very new in the university setting. The coursework was sent back and forth through the mail with an occasional in-classroom meeting. He chose Upper Iowa University because they offered a degree in Public Administration and he was able to work full-time during the day and still take classes.

Outside of Avila, Iliff serves on the boards of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and Amnesty International in the state of Kansas. As one of the 15 members of the Central Region Executive Committee for AFSC, Iliff helps evaluate regional programs to determine strengths and weakness

and compile reports of recommendations for future improvements. Most recently he participated in reviews of Denver, Colorado's Immigration Rights and Youth in Militarism programs. As Legislative Coordinator for Amnesty International in the state of KS, Iliff's role is

is flexibility. We have classes starting 11 months of the year. A student could take a 5-week class in January, and because of work commitments, take February off, then enroll in an 8-week or online course that started in March." A majority of students are working toward their



to work with US Senators and Representatives to inform them of issues and encourage them to intervene in situations where human torture is knowingly taking place.

At this time, there are approximately 200 active Avila Advantage students. Iliff said, "The key component to the program

undergraduate degree in business. They also offer a Healthcare Services undergraduate degree, primarily to employees at Truman Hospital. Iliff said he would like to expand enrollment in this program to non-hospital employees. Iliff is currently teaching Conflict Resolution at Truman Hospital on

Wednesday nights. He also co-teaches Peace Studies each year for both the Avila Advantage program and Avila's undergraduate course schedule. This is a course he began at Avila in 1997, which he is still very passionate about.

Last year, Avila Advantage presented degrees to the first three graduates of their Master's of Science in Organizational Development (MSOD) program. Iliff noted "the MSOD program was just born 3 years ago and has grown tremendously due to the hard work of Lacey Smith, Assistant Dean of the School of Professional Studies. There are other colleges or universities in the Kansas City area that offer courses on organizational development, but Avila is the *only* one to offer the degree."

As someone who earned his own bachelor's degree through distance learning, Iliff said he would like to see the Avila Advantage program offer at least one degree that is completed entirely online in the next year. Avila's strategic goal is to increase the schools' technology assisted classes, for all schools within Avila. They are currently working on the process to be accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to administer online degrees. According to Iliff, in the current Avila Advantage program, half of the classes for the undergraduate business degree are online courses.

**Hometown:** Kansas City

**Philosophy:** A person with unrealistic goals is called a dreamer. But if those dreams happen, he is called a man of vision with the courage to believe in himself and follow his dreams. Only time will tell.

**Passion:** The mountains

**Most influential person in your life:** My wife,

**All-time favorite book:** *The Once and Future King*, by T.H. White

**All-time favorite movie:** Casablanca

**All-time favorite musician or band:** Robert Earl Keen, Jr. or Van Morrison

**How you relax:** Athletics

**Favorite meal:** Pizza or Hayward's BBQ

**One place you've always dreamed of visiting:** Mt. Everest or Tibet in general.



# Avila Profiles

## De Roo Goes Choo-Choo

By David Matheny

It was in the late summer of 1985 that John De Roo took his very first train ride. He has had a love for trains and the railroads for as long as he can remember. As far as he knows it is in his genetics starting with his grandfather that worked as a clerk in four different cities for the Burlington Route from 1923 to 1973.



De Roo just can't get enough of the railroad. He is what railroad fans call a "foamer," or in other words, he has a huge passion for trains. He owns an elaborate train set in his basement and has been a part of the Kansas City Chapter of National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) for the past seven years.

He says he goes on trips that only serious fans take. In fact, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and the day after thanksgiving in 2006, De Roo took a train ride to Illinois and back just to enjoy the trip. He had an hour and a half wait for the next train to come and take him home. So he just watched other trains go by. "There's nothing like the romance of the rails," he says.

Now days De Roo attends meetings on the fourth Friday of every month to talk railroads and trains with the NRHS. He also attends different banquets and train rides as his passion grows greater.

## Ron McCleary: Wired About Wisdom

By: Chris Williamson

Ron McCleary, MS is a believer in wisdom. He has instructed computer science for the last ten years at Avila. Teaching was a goal of his ever since earning his undergraduate degree from University of Missouri-Rolla.

Initially, he wished to study engineering—computer science was an interesting accident.

One day an excited friend explained to him the greatness of computer science. McCleary checked it out, liked his first programming class, and got hooked.

After earning his undergraduate degree he ran a family business for a year and a half. The desire to use his degree led him to spend two years writing computer programs for a small university.

Working in a place of higher learning seemed to catalyze his pursuit of becoming an educator. He went back to Rolla and attended graduate school. He applied himself to earning his master's degree, with the intention of teaching. Shortly after earning his M.S., McCleary moved to Kansas City hoping to find a reason to stay. A job at Rockhurst University was reason enough.

He taught there briefly before the executive V.P. of Rockhurst asked him to take a position as director of the computer center. This occurred just before the Internet mushroomed in popularity. Rockhurst had no computer network when he started and by the end of his tenure boasted a fully networked campus.

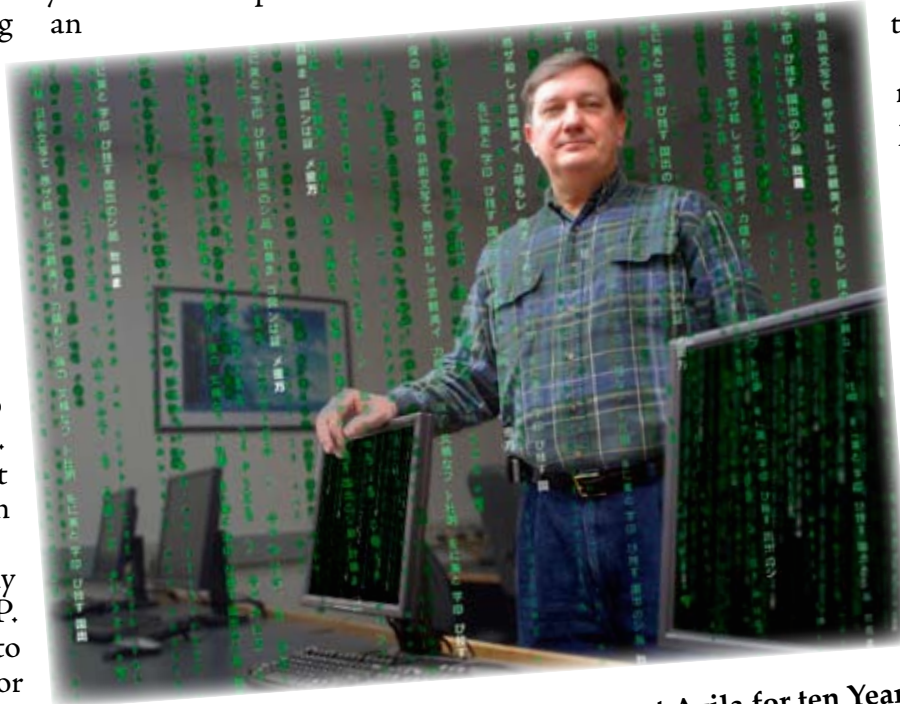
He took his acquired experience into the private industrial sector for five years after leaving Rockhurst. This gave him even more real world experience and the salary that goes with a fast-paced business environment. But money cannot fulfill every desire.

Eventually, McCleary had to reconcile the fact that he wanted to teach.

Thumbing through the paper one day he saw an ad for a position teaching computer science at Avila. He talked to his wife about the pay cut he'd have to take and then applied—he has been here ever since.

That was ten years ago. Now, McCleary teaches. Sure, he does projects for companies every now and then, but he is truly satisfied as a teacher.

One thing he likes about Avila is that he gets to actually 'teach' here. Larger schools have many professors spending all of their time doing research in lieu of teaching. It pleases him that Avila is a place where the classes are small and professors get to know their students well enough to help them succeed.



Ron McCleary has taught computer science at Avila for ten years.

The difference is noticeable he says. Avila boasts a small, tight-knit community of educators and learners. He made it understood to the Talon that it is an advantageous environment for a student.

"Professors in a department chit-chat with one another and of course they end up talking about the reason why they are there—students," he says, "A teacher might say 'hey so-and-so seemed preoccupied

today in class today, how are they doing in your class?' And they can work together to help the student succeed. You don't get that at larger colleges."

When he is able to know his students, he gets to know *how* they learn.

For instance, he says if a student performs well at producing program code, then he will try and help the student see how it relates to the big picture, and he can help a student who sees the big picture focus on the technical details of programming. This something that probably couldn't be done at a big school, where students are treated like a faceless number.

McCleary's goal is to prepare students for life in the real world. He knows the type of challenges they are going to face. It is this wisdom he hopes to pass on to his students.

When he's not teaching, you'll probably find his nose in a book, or three. He usually has two or three books he's reading at any given time. McCleary is clearly a believer in wisdom!

To balance the cold, mathematical logic of computer science, he likes to attend church on Sunday and even helps teach Sunday school sometimes.

He has sung praises and hymns since his youth and he now leads the congregation in singing during church services.

Since he loves music, it won't surprise you that he sports an mp3 player full of folk music wherever he goes.

Let McCleary's life be a lesson, (aka 'a word to the wise'): Don't give up on your dreams, sing praise, and read lots of books!



# Avila Profiles

## Higgs Digs In

By Banen Chaney

First-year student Danielle Higgs has a lot on her plate in her college career. The nursing major is a dual-sport athlete and full-time student.

Higgs came to Avila University from Hazelwood West in St. Louis, Missouri. In high school, she was a member of the soccer team, cheerleading squad, and President of the pep club. She also took dance for many years.

Danielle chose to come to Avila because she was offered a soccer scholarship. Upon arriving at Avila, she was given the opportunity to be a part of the cheerleading squad. The squad had lost a few members and was looking to take on a few more. Higgs decided to try out. Because of her years of experience, she made the squad.

Because soccer plays in the fall and cheerleading is at its prime with football games and homecoming activities, Higgs had to stay focused during her first semester of college.

"It takes a lot of time management skills to be a member of two teams," Higgs said.

Even though Higgs is

education. Aside from soccer, she had heard of the reputation of Avila's nursing program. Knowing it was one of the best nursing schools around helped her completely decide on her choice of colleges.

Ever since early childhood, Higgs has wanted to be a nurse. She first decided to do this when her brother was born. He had difficulties at birth and had to spend a lot of time in the hospital. After seeing the way the nurses cared for the small children in the hospital, she was intrigued. She wanted to be able to help children the same way the nurses had helped her little brother. Years later, she still holds on to this goal.

In the spring semester, Danielle had to balance soccer and cheerleading once again. The cheerleading squad was preparing for their conference competition and soccer had begun conditioning for the upcoming season. Higgs, again, managed to balance her time and schoolwork wisely. Through her determination, she was able to split practices of both teams and be at both team's games when necessary. She also got the privilege of winning conference with the

cheerleading squad in her first year on the team. This made it seem as though all of her hard work and determination had paid off.

Danielle Higgs could be a role model to anyone. Her ability to balance her time is admirable and truly shows her character and respect for others. In an attempt to not let her teammates down, she was always there to be a working member. People such as Danielle help to make Avila a great place to receive an education

playing two sports, she is still only receiving a scholarship for soccer. One must truly love their sport in order to be a member without any compensation. Even though athletics seem very important to Danielle, she is also an exceptional student.

After succeeding in many advanced courses in high school, Higgs seemed as though she was ready to be challenged with a college

## Dean Fascinated with the Bone-Chillin'

By Monica Lang

"I'm pretty sure [my students] know everything about me...." Really, does Avila know everything about this professor? She is considered to have a bright mind. She is an attorney. She is a doctor. She reads novels in her spare time. She is a photographer. What is she not? This talented lady chooses to work with people of a very scary species. What do we have behind door number three? Delany Dean JD, PhD.

She works with the most remarkable, captivating, mind-boggling creatures to walk the earth, psychopaths. They are unlike your average Joe, or maybe they are. Dr. Dean claims that "a lot of people, even psychology students, don't understand this concept." Because of the society's media, the term "psycho" has been given the connotation of crazy, cuckoo, or mentally insane. In reality, this is not true.

Dr. Dean explains, that "a "psychopath," "sociopath," or "antisocial personality" arise out of the same circumstance: there have always been people who persistently take advantage of others, who are irresponsible, and sometimes cruel. They are self centered, and have little or no regard for established authority."

Most students have referred to ex-boyfriends/ex-girlfriends, parents, friends, teachers, or even siblings as "psycho," but does he or she really understand what a "psychopath" is in clear-cut terms? Dr. Dean agrees that most people do not. A Saint Louis University friend, who decided to remain anonymous, argued, "Oh, I know what a psychopath is. I could point out a psycho, any day of the week. I'm not stupid."

Dr. Dean clarifies that "to say that a person is "antisocial" can have two different connotations. In everyday terminology, we mean that the person just doesn't like to be in social groups; a person who is not "social." But, in clinical terms, it means a person with antisocial personality disorder may

very well enjoy being in social settings; the problem is that he or she gets in trouble because he or she doesn't abide by social norms."

All that basically means is that a "psychopath" is not always sitting in the corner wearing a t-shirt that says "I'm a psycho." This means that a person of this antisocial personality disorder is extremely manipulating, conniving, or deceitful, but "others

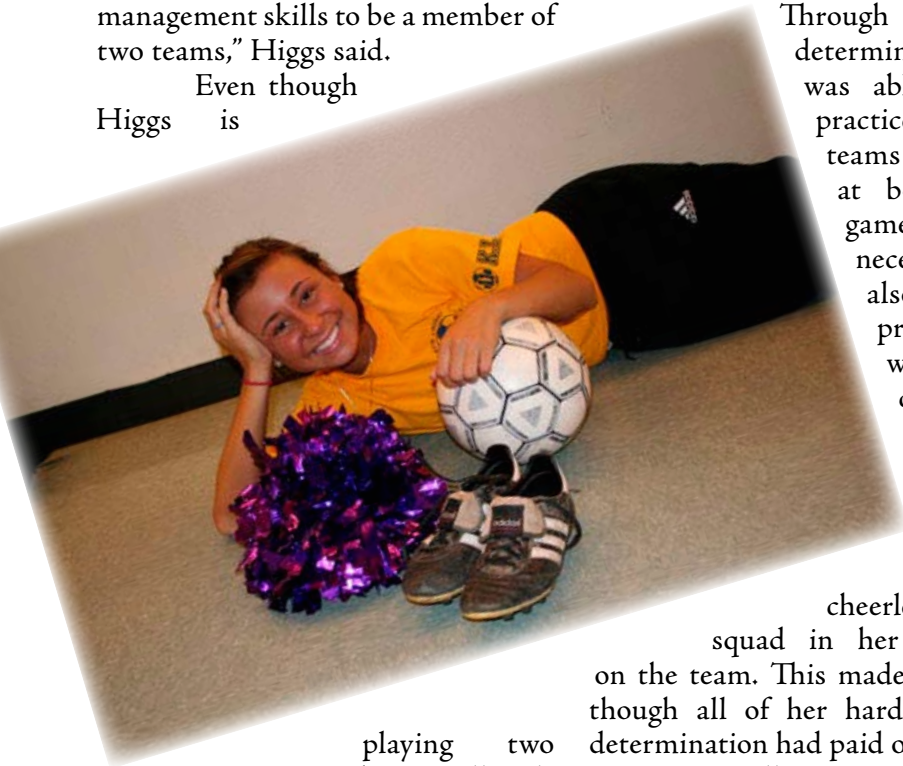
are successful in careers that reward the ruthless." He or she will get in trouble with the law day after day, because he or she "appears to have no conscience."

The saying, keep your friends close and your enemies closer is a limerick that a sociopath might know

the tune to. So why would Dr. Dean choose to work with these types of people, she explained, "They are fascinating because they are so unlike the ordinary human being; they raise all kinds of questions about what it means to be human."

What an amazing way to look at what God has created. We are all creatures of God, so why not learn from them, right? Agreeing with Dr. Dean, psychopaths are the most enthralling creatures, who constantly make people ask questions about themselves. Could all crime be a ripple effect of destructive antisocial personalities in the world? Nobody knows exactly.

Dr. Dean is truly a bright mind with a great point of view of looking at what most students consider bone-chilling. Dr. Dean spoke the truth when she said, "There is so little time... to assign the wonderful materials out there in the world." For any student to say, "I'm smart" is ineffective because there is just too much knowledge to attain, too much wisdom to take advantage of at Avila.







# Feature Profile



## Ratliff Brings the Fire to Life

By: Colleen Reagan

Ashley Ratliff, a miracle baby as well as a million dollar baby, was born September 16, 1987. Her mother Cheryl Ratliff tried to have a child at the age of 30 and was unsuccessful. After nine years, eight miscarriages, and a million dollars in surgery, Ashley was placed upon this earth.

She was an enormous gift to her parents and that is an obvious truth today when she says, "The two most important people in the world to me are my parents."

She is loved by many people and she enjoys giving the love right back.

Ashley always makes sure she puts others before herself and is always thinking positive. She has so much motivation towards life, which is what helped her get to where she is right now.

Ashley is a first year student here at Avila University. She chose to attend Avila after she received a scholarship to play on the Golf team.

She has played golf since the age of ten when her parents taught her the game. Avila, being a small school with individual attention, also sparked her interest. Ashley came here to major in Business Administration with focus in either Accounting or Marketing.

On top of playing on Avila's golf team and being a well rounded student, Ashley is involved in multiple student organizations: Campus Ministry, RHA, and Avila Ambassador.

Outside of Avila she is involved in the Big Brothers Big Sisters



program where she volunteers with children within the community. She also volunteers to teach little kids how to

play golf at First Tee. Not only is Ashley part of all these organizations, but she has now been working at Michaels Craft Store for over 16 months. Ashley quotes, "I love being involved. I like to keep myself busy; otherwise I have no clue what to do with myself."

It may seem that Ashley's involvement with sports and so many different organizations that she has no time to just hang out, but that is incorrect. Ashley always has time for fun.

She has the bubbliest personality and always has a smile on her face. A p girl with a good sense of humor, she's laughs all the time and Ashley spends every weekend in the summer at the Lake of the Ozarks tubing, waterskiing, wakeboarding, and of course tanning with friends. She loves to go shopping with her mom or friends and just have a good time. If she could



"I can do this incredible penguin walk because my elbows are double jointed making them pop out the other direction." Now that is impressive.

When it comes to music Ashley is a country girl at heart but loves old Classic Rock and Roll and anything on the top 40 charts.

Her favorite season is fall because the leaves are so pretty and she can cheer on her KC Chiefs. Her biggest pet peeve is when people smoke, it is very disgusting to her. To make things interesting, the Talon asked her *one* item she would wish to have if stranded on a deserted island. She says, "Definitely my cell phone. I never go anywhere without it. I am a text messaging Goddess and it is how I stay connected with all my friends and family."

When asked about her goals she replied, "My goal in life is to support myself and the lifestyle I lived while I was under my parents care." Ashley says.

have a closet full of something that she bought from the mall it would be filled with Coach purses. She has a sickness that can't be helped when it comes to Coach items. One thing is for certain, she cannot live without food, but come to think of it, who can? Her favorite food is mushroom pizza. What is Ashley's most unique talent?



celebrating  
our world

Gospel Fest  
Sunday, February 25, 4:00 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Restorative Justice by Dr. Regina Staves  
Wednesday, February 28, 4:00 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ – Author of Dead Man Walking  
& The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account  
to Wrongful Executions  
Wednesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m., Goppert Theatre

Ethnic Food & Culture Celebration...  
Free Food, Culture, Music & Fun!  
Thursday, March 1, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.,  
Marian Dining Room

Sr. Helen Prejean Brownbag Discussion  
on the Judicial System  
Thursday, March 1, 12:30 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Dead Man Walking Theatre Production  
March 1, 2, & 3, 8:00 p.m., Goppert Theatre;  
March 4, 2:00 p.m., Goppert Theatre

Exotic World Dances  
Monday, March 5, 6:00 p.m., Marian Dining Room

Bingo Night at Villa Ventura  
Tuesday, March 6, 7:00 p.m., Villa Ventura

AvilaStock...featuring the rock band Midnight to Twelve  
Wednesday, March 7, 4:45 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Feast of St. Joseph  
Monday, March 19, 11:00 a.m., Foyle Hall

Peace Pole Dedication  
Monday, March 19, Noon, The Quad

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AVILA UNIVERSITY

Jack Canfield Video – Author of Chicken Soup for the Soul  
Tuesday, March 20, 5:00 p.m., O’Rielly 202  
or Wednesday, March 21, O’Rielly 102

Folk/Rock Band – Raining Jane  
Tuesday, March 20, 6:00 p.m., Marian Alumni Lounge

Eyes Wide Open Exhibit – An Exhibition on the Human  
Cost of the Iraq War  
Wednesday, March 21, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,  
Marian Alumni Lounge

Eyes Wide Open Brownbag Discussion  
Wednesday, March 21, Noon, Marian Alumni Lounge

Folk Musician Danny Cox  
Wednesday, March 21, 7:00 p.m., Foyle Hall

Avila Talent Show  
Thursday, March 22, 5:00 p.m., Marian Dining Room

Inside Iraq: The Untold Stories by Mike Shiley  
Monday, March 26, 7:00 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Bingo Night at Villa Ventura  
Tuesday, March 27, 7:00 p.m., Villa Ventura

Comedienne Alexandra McHale  
Wednesday, March 28, 6:30 p.m., Marian Alumni Lounge

The Lost Boys by James Deng  
Thursday, March 29, 4:00 p.m., Marian Alumni Lounge

An Inconvenient Truth Screening & Talk Back  
Thursday, March 29th, 6:00 p.m., Whitfield Centre

Check out the Women’s History Month Quiz on page 13! Be the first to answer the most correctly and you win a Micro 1.0 GB Cruzler Flash Drive.